Historic Preservation

QUARTERLY OF THE NATIONAL TRUST
FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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A TRIBUTE TO THE GIRL SCOUTS

This is a message of welcome and congratulation to the newest, youngest and largest member organization to join the National Trust: the Girl Scouts of the United States of America. This organization has demonstrated its patriotic desire to become part of our nationwide movement to preserve the architectural and historical treasures of our country by embarking upon the preservation of the birthplace and girlhood home of its founder, Juliette Gordon Low.

This handsome, ante-bellum mansion in Savannah, Georgia, was to be sold to settle an estate, and because of its valuable location near the expanding business district, was in immediate danger of being razed to make way for commercial development. Members of the Gordon family generously delayed negotiations with commercial interests, so that the National Board of Directors of the Girl Scouts could bring the purchase of their Founder's Birthplace before the National Convention held in Cincinnati, October 18-21, 1953. The project was supported enthusiastically.

The earlier history of this noted house is recorded on a plaque on Oglethorpe Avenue in Savannah:

" . . . The residence opposite this site known as the Gordon House was built between 1819-1821. A fine example of Regency Architecture, it was designed by the eminent architect, William Jay. The third story and side porch was later added.

"The house was originally owned by James N. Wayne, one of Georgia's most illustrious public men. After service as Mayor of Savannah, Judge of the Eastern Circuit, and as Congessman he was appointed to the Supreme Court of the United States by President Jackson in 1835. An able and courageous jurist, Wayne served on the highest court with distinction until his death in 1867 in Washington.

"Though devoted to his native state, Judge Wayne was a strong Unionist. Opposing secession he remained on the Supreme Court after Georgia left the Union, a decision sharply contrasting with the course of his son, Henry C. Wayne who resigned his commission in the U. S. Army in 1860 on the approach of war to serve Georgia as Adjutant General.

"The Wayne residence was purchased in 1831 by a distinguished Savannahian, William Washington Gordon (1796-1842), organizer and first president of the Central of Georgia Railroad. President Taft was a guest there in 1909."

But for Girl Scouts, the most important date in the history of this house was 1860, when Juliette Gordon was born there. Shortly thereafter, her father, William Washington Gordon, left Savannah to serve as a general in the Confederate Army.

While in England years later, after her marriage, Juliette Gordon Low became acquainted with Sir Robert Baden-Powell, originator of the scouting movement for both boys and girls, and she conceived the idea of establishing a Girl Scout movement in the United States.

Immediately on her return to Savannah in 1912, she set about building the new organization and enrolled her own niece, Daisy Gordon, as the first recruit. Others quickly followed, (the idea caught like wild-fire) until today, 40 years later, the Girl Scout organization numbers more than 2,000,000 members who represent all 48 states, every Territory and U. S. Possession. Furthermore there are almost 600 U. S. A. Girl Scout troops on foreign soil, in 41 countries. The Girl Scouts of the U. S. A. is affiliated with 32 Girl Guide and Girl Scout organizations representing as many countries through the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and works closely with the Association and its members. The important international aspects of Girl Scouting are particularly involved with the Founder's memory, and are supported by contributions of the Girl Scouts to the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund.

This distinguished Georgian received many honors for her role as Founder; among them the issue of a commemorative stamp by the U. S. Post Office in 1948, and in 1950 by the granting of a Congressional Charter to the Girl Scout organization. Perhaps, though, the greatest tribute of all, is the plan of the Girl Scouts to acquire and restore their Founder's birthplace. This does honor not only to a great leader, but to every Girl Scout who participates in the project.

Headquarters for the special fund raising campaign have been set up in Savannah. The address is Juliette Gordon Low Project, P.O. Box 3201, Station A, Savannah, Georgia.

Helen Hamilton Woods
(Trustee, National Trust) former
member, National Board of Directors,
Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

Birthplace of Juliette Gordon Low, Savannah, Ga., acquired by Girl Scouts of the United States of America. *Foltz*

Old Trinity Church, near Cambridge, Eastern Shore of Maryland (*c.* 1690) being restored by Colonel and Mrs. Edward W. Garbisch, as a memorial to Mrs. Garbisch's father, Walter P. Chrysler. Finlay F. Ferguson, A.I.A. of Norfolk, architect. Colonel Garbisch is a Trustee of the National Trust.

A. Aubrey Bodine

Two members of the Board of Trustees have been named to the Board of Trustees of the Institute of International Education. Arthur A. Houghton, Jr. has been elected chairman of the board, and Mrs. Henry P. Russell, first vice-chairman.

Senate House Museum, Kingston, N. Y., held an exhibition of the works of Joseph Tubby (1821-1896) who lived for many years in Kingston and was one of the Hudson River School of landscape painters.

Historic Annapolis has inaugurated a series of Wednesday night lectures to be illustrated by colored slides and special exhibits. Among the speakers, Trust member, Richard H. Howland, author of *Architecture of Baltimore*, will lecture on "Homes of Maryland's Colonial Governors". Information and advance reservations for the lectures and for a series of special open house tours of historic houses scheduled for early spring may be obtained from Historic Annapolis, 64 State Circle, Annapolis.

Rebuilding of four pioneer buildings and preparation of architectural drawings for an additional fifteen have been completed by Historic Wichita, Kansas. Larry Roberts is chairman of the building committee.

Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society was presented the Class A Award of Merit of the American Association for State and Local History for the restoration of *Adena*, home of Thomas Worthington at Chillicothe. *Adena*, erected between 1805 and 1807, was designed by Benjamin H. Latrobe, and is one of only three surviving residences of his design that remain; the others are Decatur House on Lafayette Square, Washington, D. C., and *Long Branch*, a great plantation house near Millwood, Va.

The Naval Historical Foundation, in cooperation with the Embassy of Japan and the United States Navy, presented a Pollock Toy Theatre play commemorating the Perry Centennial, a production of the Children's Museum of Washington, D. C. The play, "Commodore Matthew C. Perry opens the Door to Japan for Friendship and Trade," was written by Mrs. Ernestine Perry, illustrated by Hioshi Suzuki and Chief Richard A. Genders, combat artist, U.S.N.

A gift of $25,000 from the P. H. Hanes Knitting Company to Old Salem, Inc. will make possible the restoration of the Boys School now used as the Wachovia Museum in Winston Salem, N. C. This gift brings the total of the restoration fund to $600,000. The ultimate goal is $2,500,000 to $3,000,000 to be used to restore the old Moravian town founded in 1756 for its bi-centennial.

Among the spring programs scheduled by Friends of Old Dover will be lectures on "Old Fort Delaware," "Dover's Trees" and "Delaware Folklore."

Smith's Castle, Cocumscussoc, at Wickford, R. I., held open house in November to celebrate completion of the restored eighteenth century garden. The restoration was directed by the South County Garden Club which had been awarded the Founder's Fund Award of the Garden Club of America for a community project sponsored by a local club. Norman B. Smith is provost of the Cocumscussoc Association.

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THOSE IVIED WALLS

Among architects and others concerned with the preservation of old buildings, a new organization seems destined to come into existence—a Poison Ivy League. Its members will be recruited from those who see nothing beautiful or picturesque in the ivy runners forcing their way between loose brick and stone joints, creeping under cornices and shingles and undermining foundations of historic buildings.

Andrew H. Hepburn, Jr., A.I.A., reporting on the survey of the surviving architecture of the Eastern Shore of Maryland pointed with despair at the vast damage, particularly to old churches, of the ivy menace. In addition to structural damage, the thick masses of ivy hanging on outer walls create dampness and mold on the interior.

Milton Grigg, A.I.A., who is engaged in strengthening the foundations and structural members of Thomas Jefferson's *Monticello*, and in installing modern heating and airconditioning to further protect the historic structure, sent photographs of ivy damage. Large runners of ivy had forced their way eighteen inches into the masonry foundations, and had created other havoc with wooden sills.

In New Harmony, Indiana, fastgrowing vines of a similar type, planted to cover an unfortunate advertising billboard painted on the bricks on the side wall of the Rappite brother's Community House No. 2, are now uprooting the old box cornice and creating a problem of dampness within the building.

To those entrusted with old buildings, think twice before planting ivy. If ivy has been planted, watch its devious and dangerous ways and keep it well under control, or your building may well be a candidate for membership in the Poison Ivy League.—H.D.B.

ON MEMBERSHIP

"In the days when the wealthy benefactor, on whose generosity the Trust was once largely dependent, has become rarer, the support of a wide and enthusiastic membership is vital to both our finances and prestige. In this democratic age the influence that the Trust can exert is in some degree proportionate to its membership. Every member has a right to feel that he is playing a direct part in the struggle for the preservation of our architecture and unspoilt countryside in which the Trust is unremittingly engaged."

(*Annual Report of English National Trust, 1952-3*)

With each copy of this issue of *Historic Preservation* a new and revised Fact Sheet is enclosed, with the most recent list of member organizations. Each Fact Sheet contains an invitation to membership, and each member is requested to invite a friend to join.

NEW MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Albany County Historical Association (N.Y.); American Philosophical Society Library; Antiquarian Society of Birmingham (Ala.); Christ Church, Washington Parish (D. C.); Clarke County Historical Association (Va.); Colonial Society of Massachusetts; Girl Scouts of the United States of America; Mount Vernon Ladies' Association (Va.); Nantucket Historical Association (Mass.); Old Court House Memorial Chapel Committee (Dayton, Ohio); Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges; Ulster County Garden Club (N. Y.).

ANNUAL MEETING

The eighth annual meeting of the National Trust has been scheduled for October 29 and 30 in Chicago. The Edgewater Beach Hotel will be headquarters. The program and detailed announcements of the plans will be sent to all members and delegates of member organizations well in advance of the meeting.

TEXAS SURVEY

The state of Texas has appointed a committee of eighteen citizens to study the subject of the preservation and dissemination of the records of Texas and Texans. The program was inaugurated by the state in recognition of the many people "giving freely of time and money in order that the previous documents and landmarks of Texas history may be preserved."

The committee members who are charged with the responsibility of reporting to the governor on a statewide preservation program are: The Honorable James E. Wheat, Miss Ima Hogg, John P. Morgan, Mrs. Lois Wakefield, L. W. Kemp, J. Evetts Haley, Mrs. Mike Butler, Bishop L. J. FitzSimon, R. N. Richardson, Robert C. Wells, Carl C. Rister, Colonel C. R. Tips, Lane Taylor, Stuart McGregor, Mrs. E. A. Peden, Millard Cope, Mrs. Willie Mae Weinert, and Sidney Samuels.

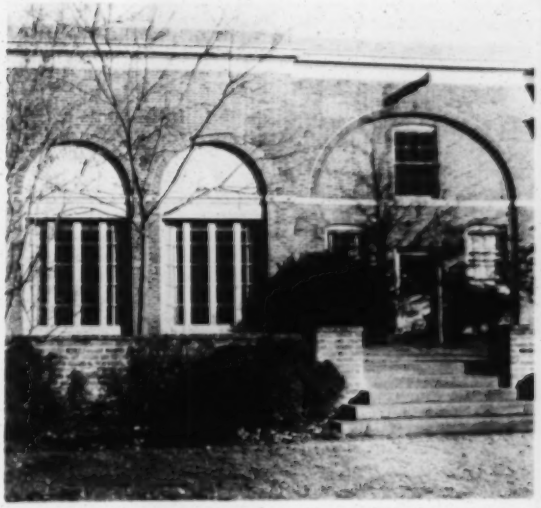
ACTIVE PRESERVATION

New York, N. Y. Grace Protestant Episcopal Church on Broadway and 10th, the 110 year old structure designed by James Renwick, which has been named as one of the twenty buildings in New York City that should be preserved at all costs, has been undergoing a $350,000 restoration. Its Gothic parapets and pinnacles, soft and crumbling from the eroding effect of weather and chemicals in the air, its marble spire leaning at a dangerous angle of two feet, are no longer in danger of crashing down, since copper and bronze dowels have been substituted for rusted iron ones, and faulty stones have been removed.

Taos, N. M. Thorne House (1715), a completely restored old building of Pueblo style in the center of four acres of wooded grounds and gardens, which was bequeathed to the city by the late Dr. Victor Thorne, has been acquired by the Taos Artists' Association, which plans to use it as an historical and art museum. Among the exhibition rooms open to the public, is a colonial room containing hand-carved wooden furniture made by native craftsmen, and a morada or penitente chapel filled with early examples of the religious art of this old Franciscan order.

Birmingham, Ala. This fall more than 1125 visitors attended the opening ceremonies marking completion of *Arlington*, the 110-year-old mansion restored under the auspices of the Arlington Historical Association. The association raised $25,000 toward the purchase price, which was matched by an equal sum from the city of Birmingham. It is now administered by the Antiquarian Society of Birmingham, a Trust member. The ante-bellum mansion was built by Judge William S. Mudd, and during the Civil War it became headquarters of Union General James Wilson and his staff, who directed the destruction of iron furnaces in the area and the campaign against Selma and Tuscaloosa.

Burlingame, Calif. Although a huge housing development of 2500 homes, complete with shopping centers and supermarkets is scheduled to be erected on the 1100 acres of the old Mills estate, *Happy House* and adjacent park will be preserved. The 42-room mansion was erected in 1867 by Darius Ogden Mills who made both history and money in California in its early days. Into the Versailles-styled mansion went furniture and decorations selected by Mrs. Mills at the Paris Exposition of 1867. The family china, made to order at the exposition, is ready to be placed on a dining table that can be extended to 22 feet: in the music room a billiard table is in order with cues and chalk ready, the balls racked, although the cushions are a bit dead.



Library of national headquarters of the American Institute of Architects in the former stable and carriage house of The Octagon.
American Institute of Architects

Wapwallopen, Pa. The secretary of the Wapwallopen Historical Society, Clark Kirkendall, reports that their community-wide project for restoration of the 117-year-old church has been completed. Their next project is to be a history of the community and its early families.

THE OCTAGON

On January 13, the American Institute of Architects held a reception to celebrate the opening of the Institute's new Library Building, and to mark the completion of the restoration of the Octagon property. The famous old Octagon with its adjoining stable and smoke house has been owned by the Institute since 1899. The house, designed by Dr. William Thornton, which was the temporary White House for President Madison in 1815, has been restored.

The facade of the old stable, once slated for demolition, has been preserved nearly intact. The arched carriage doors facing the garden provide generous windows for the reading room of the Library. The interior has been completely modernized to house the Institute's growing architectural collections and its expanding resources on American architectural subjects. William Dewey Foster, a National Trust member, was architect of the restoration. George Pettingill is the librarian.

An exhibition of early photographs, prints, drawings and plans of the Octagon, including progress photographs of various phases of the restoration were displayed. These are now part of the permanent archives of the Library.

PROPOSED PRESERVATION

Nashville, Tenn. Under the sponsorship of the Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities, *Belle Meade*, the handsome ante-bellum mansion in Nashville attributed to William Strickland is to be restored. The house has a notable group of old outbuildings, including an early log cabin which was the first dwelling on the old tract, and the stables that housed such famous thoroughbreds as Iroquois, the only American horse to win the English Derby.

Binghamton, N. Y. Preservation, not only of a section of old Chenango Canal, but of the old covered bridge near Downsville, Delaware County, seems assured. State Park authorities are discussing methods of saving the old bridge, which is scheduled to be inundated in a huge reservoir project in the near future, and moving it to Chenango Valley State Park. The suggestion originated with a member of the Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges.

Greenwich, Conn. Centuries-old burying grounds lying within town limits of this Connecticut town have been neglected since most of the descendants of the colonial and revolutionary settlers who were buried there have died or dispersed. The town selectmen have voted to consider regular appropriation for their care, and the state chapter of the Sons of the Ameican Revolution has offered its cooperation.

Los Angeles, Calif. Nine years ago the state of California gave the city of Los Angeles a 25-year lease on *El Aliso*, home of California's historian and archaeologist, Charles Fletcher Lummis, who was also first city librarian. The cactus gardens have been opened to the public, but the California-mission house with its notable Indian collections has not, and has fallen into bad disrepair. Members of the Lummis Memorial Association met with city and state authorities to discuss a plan for urgent repairs and for opening the house to the public.

Indianapolis, Ind. Governor George N. Craig has taken the first step toward the restoration of *Hazelden*, home of George Ade, the Hoosier humorist and playwright. The 11-acre estate in northern Indiana was left to the state at Ade's death in 1944 for public use. It has a small golf course but the buildings are in disrepair. The governor has named a 20-member commission to take over the site for the Indiana department of conservation.

Portland, Ore. Old Yaquina Bay lighthouse, which marks the first authenticated landfall made in the Pacific Northwest by white men, has been proposed as a national historical monument by members of the Lincoln County Historical Society and the Oregon Historical Society.

White Plains, N. Y. Preservation of the Lyon House on North Street will be dependent upon authority from the city council to remove it from its 200-year-old foundations to a new location. Executives of General Foods, who acquired the old house, attempted to fit the building into their modern plant without success, and rather than raze it are seeking means to move and restore it on a suitable new location.

New Brunswick, N. J. In celebration of its 250th anniversary last year, the First Reformed Church on Neilson Street, conducted an intensive program of repair and renovation. It now plans to continue a program of preservation in the old burying ground which served the church and New Brunswick Theological Seminary (now Rutgers University) as a cemetery for many years.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Rochester, N. Y.—Bulldozers working on the State Thruway unearthed skeletons in a pre-historic Iroquois burying gound near the village of Phelps in Ontario County. Alfred Guthe of the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences salvaged four skeletons, of more than fifty, and regretted the destruction and scattering of the rest by the bulldozers'.

Sonoma, Calif. Intensive excavations around the Mission of San Francisco Solano de San Francisco have brought to light old walls and walkways whose existence were unknown and otherwise unrecorded. The excavations were conducted by a University of California team under special arrangements with the California State Park Commission, which operates the Mission as an historical monument.

Wilmington, Del. The state of Delaware has created a new commission, the Delaware Archaeological Board, whose principal function will be fundamental research into the archaeology of Delaware. Members of the Board will include one representative of the Archives Commission, the Delaware State Museum, University of Delaware, Sussex Archaeological Association, the Archaeological Society of Delaware, the State Board of Education and the State Highway Department.

Prairie du Rocher, Ill. Last fall, a thirteen-member party, led by Howard D. Winters and John Buettner-Janusch of the University of Chicago, unearthed an Indian village possibly dating back 10,000 years. Radio carbon tests will be used to determine the age of artifacts recovered from the site.

DESTRUCTION

Greeley, Colo.—The mansion of Benjamin Harrison Eaton (1833-1904), once governor of Colorado has been razed. Some of the woodwork and marble mantels brought from Chicago when it was built in 1881 have been salvaged.

Louisville, Ky.—Kalmey Farm, with 59 acres and the old mansion house (1808-1813), the biggest site left within the city limits, has been sold for sub-dividing. About 100 houses are scheduled to be built on it. Whether the handsome old brick house with its carved cherry woodwork will be converted into apartments or razed has not been decided.

St. Louis, Mo.—Maj. John Dougherty's fur and Indian goods warehouse at the foot of Prairie Avenue was razed in December. Dr. Lewis G. Swekosky, St. Louis antiquarian reports the structure was first built in 1830 on 260 acres bought by Capt. Lewis Bissell.

Williamsburg, Va.—Fires swept and destroyed Phi Beta Kappa Hall at the College of William and Mary, but with the aid of local fire companies and major assistance by firefighters from nearby military installations, was extinguished before endangering the original buildings of the old colonial college. The hall was presented to the college by the united chapters of Phi Beta Kappa and dedicated in 1926 on the 150th anniversary of the founding of America's oldest scholastic society at the college.

New York, N. Y.—Talbot Hamlin, F.A.I.A., recorded in November the passing of the old Produce Exchange Building at Bowling Green, and questions the wisdom of the decision that permitted its destruction to gain additional city office space. He writes, "is the city and are its inhabitants such slaves to economic pressures that they have no say in what they see, no power to preserve what they love? Is it not time for our cities to study legal methods of self-preservation?" Within the same month, in a communication "Tearing down Beauty", Edward Steese, chairman of the Committee on Historic Structures of the Municipal Art Society (a Trust member) records the threatened destruction of 936 Fifth Avenue, one of only 89 structures in Manhattan selected as worthy of preservation for outstanding architectural merit. By the end of November the City Planning Commission announced approval of a plan to purchase and demolish all properties in Patchin Place and adjoining it in Greenwich Village for a new school building "The Patch" has been a village landmark since 1848 and among its famous occupants were E. E. Cummings, John Masefield, Eugene O'Neill, Theodore Dreiser, Dudley Digges and John Howard Lawson.

After being on the National Trust "Danger List" since 1947, the classic Dayton, Ohio, Courthouse built 1847-50 after the Theseum in Athens, has been saved through the activity of the Old Courthouse Memorial Committee, a Trust member organization. This view was made in 1902 by the Detroit Photographic Co. *Library of Congress*

Mascoutah, Ill.—A new Masonic lodge will be erected on the site of the historic Cottage Hotel where Abraham Lincoln and many other notables were said to have lodged after its erection in 1857.

Honolulu, T. H.—Bishop Memorial Chapel, dedicated in 1897 is being razed to make room for a new community auditorium on the Farrington High School grounds. Colonel Harold W. Kent, president of the Kamehameha schools said, "It is with great sorrow that *Kamaaina* (oldtime) residents greet the news that the chapel is to be destroyed."

Manderson, Neb.—A fire started by a six-year old child completely destroyed the large old log house of Albert Yankton, one of the pioneer dwellings of the city.

Delta, Colo.—St. Luke's Episcopal Church, built in 1895 soon after the establishment of a parish in this Colorado city, has been razed to make room for a larger and more modern edifice.

St. Louis, Mo.—Under the caption "It Can't Happen Here!" the editors of the St. Louis *Post Dispatch* report the sale of the 106-year old building on Market Place that houses Speck's and Schumacker's restaurants, to be razed for a parking lot. The editors add, "Now we are fully in favor of ample parking space, but after all there will have to be some reason to park downtown or no one will use the parking lot. Among the reasons are—or should be—restaurants. Tear down Speck's and Schumacker's and two more reasons will be gone. Imagine someone trying to wreck Antoine's in New Orleans. Or Bookbinder's in Philadelphia. Or the Savoy Grill in Kansas City. He would be shot on the spot—and by a convergence of bullets from all directions."

Rappite Community House No. 2, 1816, New Harmony, Ind., owned by the state and now in dangerous disrepair.

Rappite fort and granary substantially built of brick and stone in 1818, now owned by descendants of the Owen family. The Owenites purchased the New Harmony settlement from the religious group in order to establish their own Utopian experiment in universal education.

Don Blair

New Harmony, Ind.—This historic community on the banks of the Wabash River, which was the site of two of the country's most notable Utopian experiments is involved in a controversy which may lead to the loss of some of its unique early buildings. First erected, 1814-1824, by the Harmony Society from Wurtemberg, Germany, under the spiritual leadership of George Rapp, the community still has 35 of the original buildings of the thriving settlement. Some of the more significant ones are in state ownership. In 1826 it was sold to a New Harmony Society, led by Robert Owen, philanthropist and social reformer from Scotland. The Owenites hoped to achieve universal happiness through universal education, and many widely-accepted philosophies of education and social reform were first practiced in this community. The Evansville *Press* calls the New Harmony memorial a "martyr to freedom," because a restoration fund raised by special state tax levy could not be spent during the war years for major repairs. The Memorial Commission has become inactive and is debating the direction of the proposed restoration. One faction in the state proposes turning over the neglected state-owned buildings to the Conservation Commission, returning the special restoration fund (now about $96,000) to the state general fund and abandoning the whole project. Among the organizations urging state reconsideration of the restoration are the National Trust, the Committee on Preservation of the American Institute of Architects, and the Society of Architectural Historians.

Silverton, Colo.—"Spike it! Don't let America's last narrow gauge railroad vanish." is the campaign slogan of the group attempting to save this early Colorado narrow gauge road that from 1882 communicated with the rich San Juan mining area. For each subscription to convert the 45-mile branch from Durango to Silverton to a scenic passenger route, the promoters will give one of the original spikes from abandoned track of the other Silverton roads.

Morgantown, W. Va.—Paw Paw Church in Dunkard Township, scene of an Indian massacre of the family of a German Baptist minister's family in 1782, is rapidly decaying. Hunters and others have used the hand-hewn wooden benches for firewood, most of the flooring has been ripped up or burned and about all that remain solid are the 14-inch thick square log walls, and a rusted tin roof of later date.

Catskill, N. Y.—Formation of a commercial company to develop a 25-acre amusement park in the Catskill area was announced last year. Near the site of the famous Catskill Mountain House, now virtually demolished, the noted resort of the Hudson River school of painters, the area will be known as *Rip's Retreat*. Patrons will be met at the gate by Rip Van Winkle in costume with his dog, and among other amusements offered will be a bowling green in the center of the area where costumed dwarfs will set up pins for the players.